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National Infant Immunization Week Arrives In April

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is a national effort to educate parents, caregivers, providers, and communities on the importance of timely infant immunization. Over 500 communities in the United States are expected to participate in this year's observance scheduled for April 25 – May 1. This year National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is working together with the Pan American Health Organization's Vaccination Week in the Americas, April 24-30, to promote immunizations in all countries of the Americas. Over 35 countries in the Western Hemisphere are joining together to highlight the need for routine vaccinations and to promote access to health services for infants and children during this week.

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) is preparing to celebrate NIIW as well. National Infant Immunization Week is the perfect opportunity for the SAMHD to reiterate the importance of children's immunizations. On April 22, 2004 San Antonio Mayor, Edward D. Garza will issue a proclamation to officially designate April 24 through May 1, 2004 as "Infant Immunization Week" in San Antonio. The focal point of NIIW activities will be the 7th Annual Vaccines for Children Provider Appreciation Breakfast. The breakfast event will be held on Thursday, April 29th at the Institute of Texan Cultures and will bring together state and local immunization partners. Dr. Fernando A. Guerra, Director of

Health, San Antonio Metropolitan Health District will deliver a local immunization perspective. Dr. Ed O. Ledbetter, a noted pediatrician, will be the featured speaker of the morning. His presentation promises to re-energize immunization advocates by illustrating the significant impact immunizations have had on children's health.

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District will promote NIIW through additional activities which will include an open house at the Main Immunization Clinic downtown, public service announcements, and street banners around town to announce NIIW and stress the importance of immunizations.

All Vaccines for Children providers are urged to mark their calendars for April 29, 2004 and check their mail starting in April for invitations to this meaningful occasion. Healthcare providers in the community are encouraged to promote NIIW in their facilities by offering incentives to patients that are seen during NIIW. Incentives might be given to patients that are up to date or immunized. Incentives could include inexpensive baby and children items like; bibs, sippy cups, coloring books, crayons, and age appropriate toys. For more information on promoting immunizations providers can view the National Immunization Program's NIIW site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/events/niiw/default.htm>.

Your efforts to promote immunizations throughout the year by educating parents and vaccinating their children have steadily increased the immunization coverage rates in San Antonio. ***But our work has just begun.*** Each year approximately 24,000 new residents are born in our community and each one is vulnerable to devastating vaccine-preventable diseases. Together we must strive to ensure that

NO CHILD GOES UN-PROTECTED!

New Program Manager

The SAMHD Immunization Division has a new Program Manager. On February 24, 2004, Dr. Fernando Guerra selected Ms.

Brenda I. Lemke, MHA to lead the Immunization Division.

Ms. Lemke is no newcomer to immunizations. Brenda started her career with the SAMHD in 1996 as an intern and then became a Health Program Specialist. She has held various titles and advanced to a Special Projects Coordinator in 1999. Ms.

Lemke has worked in several programs to include the Registry, WIC Linkage, VFC, CASA, and Special Projects.

Brenda's immunization experience over the past eight years has prepared her well for her new leadership role. Congratulations on your promotion Brenda and **Good Luck!!!**



Immunization Expert Joins SAMHD

Dr. Ed Ledbetter recently joined the SAMHD in a consultant capacity to the Immunization Division. Dr. Ledbetter has had a remarkable medical career. He graduated from the University Of Oklahoma School Of Medicine and served as a staff pediatrician at Wilford Hall US Air Force (USAF) Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, TX. During his assignment at Wilford Hall Dr. Ledbetter developed and directed the Pediatric Infectious Disease Fellowship Training Program. He later served as a clinical associate professor of pediatrics at the University Of Texas Health Sciences Center in San Antonio, TX, and as a senior medical services consultant in pediatrics to the USAF Surgeon General. Dr. Ledbetter spent five years as professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine in Lubbock. He also served as director of the Department of Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for 11 years.

Although Dr. Ledbetter is semi-retired in San Antonio, he functions as a technical reviewer for the National Network for Immunization Information (NNii), and Medical Editor of the AAP *Visual Red Book on CD-ROM*. He had the distinction of serving as the AAP Board of Directors-designated reviewer for the 2003 *Red Book*. Dr. Ledbetter has graciously agreed to serve as the featured speaker for the NIIW Vaccines for Children Provider Appreciation Breakfast on April 29, 2004.



Immunization Leader Retires

After more than 26 years with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Immunization Program (NIP), Dr. Walter Orenstein retired on March 1, 2004. He will be taking a position with the Emory Vaccine Center at Emory University. Dr. Steve Cochi will assume the position of Acting Director of the National Immunization Program.

Excerpts from Dr. Orenstein's retirement announcement are included below:

My career at CDC has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I have been privileged to be part of many successful efforts to protect and improve the public's health; each of which provided an opportunity to work together and in partnership with persons and groups throughout CDC, the United States, and the world. During my time at CDC, I witnessed the eradication of smallpox, the elimination of endemic transmission of measles in the United States, and the achievement of record or near record lows for almost all of the childhood vaccine-preventable diseases. And importantly, we have

achieved and maintained record or near record high levels of immunization coverage for childhood vaccines.

As I reflect on my time at NIP, I see many accomplishments that we can point to with much pride and satisfaction. Children with meningitis from Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), once a common occurrence on pediatric wards, have become a rarity. There are fewer than 20 cases of acquired rubella reported each year in the United States, down from over 57,000 cases in 1969 when rubella vaccine was first licensed. Marked gains have been made against varicella and invasive pneumococcal disease in children. The people at NIP should be very proud of their efforts and accomplishments.

The SAMHD wishes Dr. Orenstein great success at Emory University. To read more about the NIP or the Emory Vaccine Center go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/>, or see <http://www.emory.edu/WHSC/YERKES/VRC/>

Findings on MMR-Autism Study Retracted

Researchers behind a controversial British study that proposed a possible link between the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine and autism are now rejecting the findings of that study. The retraction appeared in the March 6 issue of *The Lancet*, which is the journal that originally published the 1998 study and was signed by 10 of the original 13 original researchers of the report. The researchers stated that, "We wish to make it clear that in this paper no causal link was established between MMR vaccine and autism as the data were insufficient."

The formal retraction comes after a newspaper investigation revealed that the lead researcher in the study, Andrew Wakefield, MD, received funding from a legal aid group that was seeking legal action on behalf of parents who believed the MMR vaccine harmed their children, a conflict of interest not disclosed at the time of publication. The release of the study in 1998 prompted a breakdown in the U.K.'s childhood vaccination program leading to outbreaks of measles in that country. Dr. Wakefield denied a conflict of interest and stated the legal action investigation and the MMR-Autism study was separate.

However, since the Wakefield study was published, the public health communities worldwide have focused on the issues of heightened awareness of vaccine safety. As a result, several major studies, including one from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) have addressed this matter and found no proof of a linkage between the MMR vaccine and autism.

For more information and articles on vaccine safety you can go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe> you can also call 1-800-232-2522.

Latest on PCV7 Vaccine Shortage

On February 13, 2004, CDC recommended that health-care providers temporarily suspend routine use of the fourth dose of 7-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV7) when immunizing healthy children. This action was taken to minimize the likelihood of shortages until Wyeth Vaccines is able to restore production capacity. Since that recommendation was issued, PCV7 production has been much less than had been expected and shipments have been delayed, resulting in shortages of vaccine. Widespread shortages may continue beyond this summer. To further conserve vaccine, CDC, in consultation with the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), recommends that all health-care providers temporarily suspend routine use of both the third and fourth doses, effective immediately. It is critical that all providers immediately follow this recommendation, regardless of their current vaccine supply. Children at increased risk of severe disease should continue to receive the routine, 4-dose series. On March 5, 2004, CDC published an MMWR article describing this revised recommendation. This recommendation reflects CDC's assessment of the existing national PCV7 supply and may be changed if the supply changes.

To be consistent with the national recommendations, the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District is temporarily suspending the third and fourth dose of PCV7 to healthy children until further notice. SAMHD advises that all Vaccines for Children (VFC) follow these recommendations. These guidelines call for adopting a two-dose series with dose one being given at two months of age and dose two at four months of age. Unvaccinated, healthy children aged 12--23 months should receive a single dose of PCV7. For healthy children aged >2 years, PCV7 is not recommended routinely. Providers are urged to continue administering the third and fourth dose to children at greatest risk of severe disease. These groups include:

1. Sick cell disease and other hemoglobinopathies, congenital or acquired asplenia or splenic dysfunction
2. Immunocompromising conditions such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), congenital immune deficiencies: B- (humoral) or T- lymphocyte deficiency, complement deficiencies (particularly C1, C2, C3 and C4 deficiency), phagocytic disorders (excluding chronic granulomatous disease)
3. Renal failure and nephrotic syndrome
4. Diseases associated with immune suppressive therapy or radiation therapy, including malignant neoplasms, leukemias, lymphomas and Hodgkin's Disease and solid organ transplantation
5. Chronic illness like chronic cardiac disease (particularly cyanotic congenital heart disease and

children with cardiac failure, chronic pulmonary disease (excluding children with asthma unless on high dose corticosteroid therapy, and CSF leaks

Health-care providers should maintain lists of children for whom conjugate vaccine has been deferred so it can be administered when the supply allows. The highest priority for vaccination among children who have been deferred is children vaccinated with <2 doses who are aged <1 year.

The SAMHD VFC Program will adjust provider orders to correspond with the nationwide shortage in the supply of PCV7. Thank you for your indulgence and continued support of our Program. For additional information and updates please access the CDC site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/news/shortages/default.htm>, or contact Vivian Flores (207-2868) or Anthony Johnson (921-1178).

Provider Spotlight

As you may have noticed *Shot Talk* has a new look and along with a new look comes a new Provider Spotlight section. The VFC staff will highlight unique providers that are enrolled in the VFC Program.

Our "Provider Spotlight" shines on Respite Care of San Antonio, Inc. and the Davidson Respite House. Founded in 1987 Respite Care of San Antonio, Inc. provides services to families who care for a child with developmental disability. Respite's goals are to strengthen and stabilize families, prevent possible child abuse, and to prevent or delay institutionalization.

The Davidson Respite House (DRH) is the first and only emergency shelter in the State of Texas dedicated to caring for individuals with developmental disabilities. The DRH accepts clients placed privately so that family members may attend to a crisis, as well as involuntary placements of children who have been removed from their home by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services as a result of neglect and/or abuse. The Medical Wellness Clinic at the Davidson Respite House is staffed by five registered nurses, one nurse practitioner, and a medical director. The clinic insures access to medical care for the children with disabilities that reside there, including immunizations.

Respite Care is a United Way funded organization that also receives support from the City of San Antonio, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Children's Trust Fund of Texas, and from private donations and fundraising activities. To learn more about Respite Care you can go to www.respitecare.org or call 737-1212.



QA/AFIX Team Off to a Great Start

The QA/AFIX team is off to a great start in 2004! The Quality Assurance/AFIX (QA/AFIX) Team has been scheduling Quality Assurance/VFC site visits at Vaccines for Children (VFC) Provider locations throughout the area. Since the beginning of the year the team has conducted forty six site visits. The mission of conducting site visits is to ensure that enrolled VFC providers are immunizing patients according to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines and adhering to VFC Program guidelines.

The QA/AFIX Team is always willing to assist you in arranging an appointment for a site visit to benefit your facility. Site visits provide valuable information to providers on their immunization practice patterns and immunization rates. Each visit is designed to help identify possible barriers to immunization that may result in low vaccination coverage or missed opportunities for immunization. The primary role of the QA/AFIX Team is to assist providers in finding practical solutions to immunization related dilemmas within their facilities. QA/AFIX is available to help you!!

The members of the QA/AFIX Team would like to thank the following providers and their staffs for participating in the QA/AFIX site visit process during this past quarter:

Dr. Lopez, Great Northwest Family Medical Center, Dr. Gaona, Dr. Mueller, Dr. Apsley-Ambriz (Southcross location), Family Clinic of San Antonio, Barrio Comprehensive Family Health Center DBA-Ella Austin Health Center, University Health System-Pediatric Inpatient, San Antonio Pediatric Associates (Walzem location), Dr. Abigail Rios Barrera, Southwest General Hospital, Dr. Romeu, Bromley Medical Group, Bexar County Juvenile Detention Center (Mission Rd. location), Dr. Maged M George, Clinica del Norte, Pediatrics, Dr. Rocha, Howard Family Practice, Christus Santa Rosa Family Health Center, The Family Doctor Office, Quinones Family Medical Clinic, Dr. Garcia, Dr. Escalante, Hill Country Family Medical Center-S.A., Generations Family Medicine, Respite Care Medical Wellness Clinic, Dr. Reyes, Battered Women's Shelter/La Paloma Centro-Med, Dr. Cynthia Villareal, SAMHD Nursing-Salinas Clinic, SAMHD Nursing-Kenwood Clinic, SAMHD Nursing-Southwest Branch Clinic, Dr. Tenorio, SAMHD Nursing-Pecan Valley Clinic, Trevino Family Clinic (Division location), UPG-Family Practice, South Park Medical Care Center, SAMHD Nursing-Eastside Branch Clinic, Kellum Pediatric Clinic (Marbach location), SAMHD Nursing-Zarzamora Clinic, SAMHD Nursing-Highway 90 Clinic, Porter Medical Associates, Dr. Khanh G. Do, SAMHD Nursing-South Flores Clinic, South Alamo Medical Group.

Congratulations to the following providers that achieved outstanding immunization coverage rates during the past quarter: SAMHD Nursing-Zarzamora Clinic (100%), SAMHD Nursing-Highway 90 Clinic (100%), South Park Medical Care Center (97%), SAMHD Nursing-Kenwood Clinic (96%), Kellum Pediatric Clinic (93%), SAMHD Nursing-Southwest Branch (90%), SAMHD Nursing-Salinas Clinic (87%), San Antonio Pediatric Associates-Walzem (86%), Dr. Garcia (84%), Clinica Del Norte Pediatrics (82%), and SAMHD Nursing-Eastside Branch Clinic (81%). These facilities worked proactively to ensure that over 80% of the children seen by their practices are up-to-date on their required immunizations of 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, and 3 Hep B by 24 months of age. All of these facilities invested substantial efforts towards improving children's immunization coverage levels within their practices. **JOB WELL DONE!!** Keep up the great work!!

Special congratulations go out to SAMHD-Zarzamora and Highway 90 Nursing Clinics. Both facilities surpassed the National Immunization Program (NIP) goal of 90% immunization coverage for the 4:3:1:3:3 series, receiving a perfect score of 100%. Immunizing on time is definitely a top priority for these SAMHD clinics and their diligent staff. Impressive work!!

We would like to once again **Thank** the VFC providers for your outstanding dedication and commitment to keeping the children in our community healthy. Your continued participation in the VFC Program is sincerely appreciated, we commend you all for the excellent work you do!!

Providers are encouraged to use the Clinical Assessment Software Application (CASA) to simplify keeping patient's immunization status up-to-date. The software is free of charge and the QA/AFIX staff is available to assist with training and installation. For more information or to schedule a site visit, please contact Kenya Wilson at 207-3974.

VFC Welcomes Our Newest Members



The VFC Program saw unprecedented growth in 2003 and continues to gain new immunization partners. The VFC staff would like to welcome Gruesbeck - Cruz Medical Clinic and Family Care and Minor Emergency Center to the VFC Program.

Flu Planning Begins Now!

Are you ready for the next flu season? Just as we end one season, it is time to start preparing for the next flu season. Pre-book orders are now being accepted by several companies. Listed below is the contact information to several sources to place your orders using the method most convenient for your practice.

Aventis is accepting orders for Fluzone® and Fluzone® Preservative-free: Pediatric dose via their website at vaccineshoppe.com or by calling 1-800-VACCINE (1-800-822-2463).

Evans Vaccines is taking orders for their brand of flu vaccine, Fluvirin. For more information please call 1-800-200-4278.

Henry Schein is pre-booking orders by phone at 1-800-772-4346 from 8am-9pm (EST) or by fax at 1-800-329-9109, 24 hours a day.

GIV (General Injectables & Vaccines, Inc.) is taking orders for injectable and intranasal vaccine at 1-800-521-7468.

FFF Enterprises orders can be placed at 1-800-843-7477, by fax at 1-800-418-4333, or online at www.fluvaccine.net.

San Antonio is “READii”

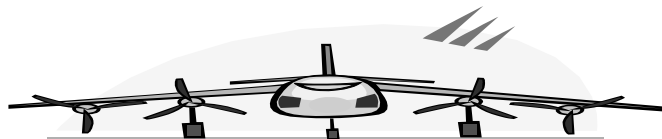
In 2002, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched five demonstration projects across the country to address the issue of disparities in immunization for elderly Hispanics and African Americans. This three year initiative entitled, the Racial and Ethnicity Adult Disparities in Immunization Initiative (READII) will utilize evidenced-based quality improvement practices to increase influenza and pneumococcal vaccination awareness, education and service delivery efforts to elderly minority citizens 65 years of age and older. The San Antonio READII Project is targeting these efforts towards the Hispanic senior population.

The San Antonio READII Project in collaboration with partners in the Westside and Southside communities are reaching out to Hispanic seniors to promote the importance of both the influenza and pneumococcal immunizations. During the summer of 2003, READII staff conducted presentations targeted at senior nutrition centers, senior apartments, and local faith based organizations. Other forms of READII community awareness include billboards, street banners, newspaper ads, TV/radio spots and the use of a VW bug wrapped up as the “Flu Bug”, courtesy of Rod East Volkswagen.

During this past flu season, READII played a crucial role in San Antonio’s immunization efforts that included over 102 SAMHD community influenza and pneumococcal outreach clinics from October 2003 thru January 2004. READII staff presented a summary of their program to top level officials from DHHS, CDC, and the Administration on Aging on March 10, 2004 in Washington DC.

Currently, READII staff is working to form partnerships with Westside and Southside-area physicians to gather information on office-based provider interventions regarding influenza and

pneumococcal immunizations. The READII project will provide free office-based education materials, assist with reducing missed opportunities and increase the immunization rates for Hispanic seniors age 65 and older. Area physicians are invited to participate in this READII provider intervention initiative by calling Jamie Ford at 207-2086.



Planning Your Vacation or Business Trip?

If you’re planning a vacation, business or missionary trip, your first stop should include a visit to one of the travel clinics at the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

Many factors should be considered when traveling abroad:

- Current health status
- Vaccination history
- Endemic health-related risks to the country or countries you will be visiting
- Planned activities in urban or rural areas
- Duration of stay and accommodations

At least 4 – 6 weeks prior to your departure, take advantage of our many services:

- Counseling pertaining to immunization status and health
- Administration of necessary vaccines (required or recommended by visiting country)
- Issuing International Health Certificates for Yellow Fever
- Updating your immunization record
- Issuing anti-malarial prescriptions

To ensure an accurate assessment of individual health needs travelers should obtain the following information before contacting the clinic:

- A trip itinerary which includes all countries to be visited and duration of stay
- A listing of special activities planned, e.g. activities of usual tourist routes
- Information regarding planned accommodations and transportation

If you have health concerns, you should consult your physician prior to your clinic visit. Both clinics operate on an appointment basis and include a minimal consultation fee.

Adults who need to update their routine immunizations may come to either location on a walk – in basis. Please call our Main Immunization Clinic at (210) 207-8894 for additional information. Adult Clinic locations are:

Main Travel Clinic located at 345 W. Commerce, 207-8872, Mon – Fri 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. by appointment or 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for adult walk-ins. Valley View Clinic which is at the San Antonio Community Link Center, 8523 Blanco Rd, 207-8735, Mon – Fri 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. by appointment or 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for adult walk – ins.



National Public Health Week, April 5-11, 2004

National Public Health Week will be held April 5-11, 2004. The theme for the 2004 observance is health disparities. The American Public Health Association (APHA) will be taking the lead in partnering with other public health organizations, agencies, associations, foundations, and private entities to educate the public and policy makers about how this key public health issue effects all Americans. It's no secret that communities across the country are struggling with widespread disparities in all aspects of health care. The APHA believes that it is time to move from statistics, which have vividly shown the widespread problems that result from health disparities, to projects/interventions that guarantee quality care for all.

Many communities are tackling these tough problems with innovative projects/interventions that others can adopt. For National Public Health Week (NPHW) 2004, APHA will be collecting and highlighting a wide variety of these projects/interventions to inspire other people who work on health care issues and want to reduce health disparities in their communities.

To commemorate this special week, the SAMHD is organizing a block walk on Tuesday, April 6th from 9:30am to 12:30pm. A census tract in the 78237 zip code, which has a high proportion of both seniors and children, has been chosen to promote immunizations across the lifespan. During the block walk SAMHD staff will go door-to-door providing information about health services available at the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

May 9-15 is National Women's Health Week.

National Women's Health Week is a national effort by an alliance of government organizations to raise awareness about manageable steps women can take to improve their health. The focus is on the importance of incorporating simple preventive and positive health behaviors into everyday life. It encourages awareness about key health issues among all women, including women with disabilities, and especially African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latinas, and American Indian/Alaska Native women, since research has shown there are

significant health disparities among these groups compared to white women.

The SAMHD will celebrate the 5th Annual National Women's Health Week May 9-15, 2004. The week will start on Mother's Day and end on the following Saturday, a time when there is much attention already being focused on women. Activities to celebrate women's health in May will start with a proclamation by San Antonio Mayor Edward D. Garza designating National Women's Health Week on May 6 followed by a media and billboard campaign, a women's health web page on the SAMHD site, an open house at Healthy Start, and other activities are in the final planning stages. For more information on Women's Health Week go to <http://www.4woman.gov/>

City Holiday Calendar for April and May

Fiesta San Jacinto Day April 23, 2004

Memorial Day May 31, 2004

Immunization Division Contacts

Program Operations:	
Brenda Lemke, MHA	207-8794
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Clinical Operations:	
Linda B. Lopez, RN	207-8804
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Betty Vestal, RN, MSN	207-2087
VFC Coordinator:	
Vivian B. Flores	207-2868
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Infant Action Plan/WIC Linkage:	
Pamela Williams	207-2869
Vaccine Studies:	
Marcela Martinez	207-3968
Registry/Info. Systems:	
Walter Widish, MS	207-8792
Adolescent/Adult Program:	
Rita Salazar	207-8877
QA/AFIX Program:	
Kenya Wilson, MA	207-3974
Foreign Travel:	
Rebecca Prieto, RN	207-8872

Immunization Resource Sites

SAMHD: www.sanantonio.gov/health

TDH: www.tdh.state.tx.us

CDC: www.cdc.gov/nip

IAC: www.immunize.org

